

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 05514 141135Z

17

ACTION EA-09

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8473

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 5514

HONG KONG PLEASE PASS EA LABOR ADVISOR HARRIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, JA, OTRA

SUBJECT: AFL-CIO/DOMEI COOPERATION IN ASIA

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH VISITING EA LABOR ADVISOR AND LABATT APRIL 8, DOMEI SEC GEN MAEKAWA, WHILE REAFFIRMING DOMEI'S COMMITMENT TO WORKING JOINTLY WITH AFL-CIO TO ASSIST NON-COMMUNIST LABOR UNIONS IN SE ASIA, MADE CLEAR THAT DOMEI HAS NOT YET FORMULATED ANY CONCRETE PLANS AND THEREFORE HAS NOT YET DECIDED ON SIZE OF ITS FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO SUCH PROGRAMS. MAEKAWA SAID DOMEI FULLY AGREES WITH AFL-CIO THAT AID SHOULD BE IN FORM OF SPECIFIC PROGRAMS, INCLUDING TRAINING, AND THAT NO FINANCIAL GRANTS SHOULD BE GIVEN DIRECTLY TO SOUTHEAST ASIAN UNIONS. ACCORDING TO MAEKAWA, DOMEI IS NOW ATTEMPTING TO CONVINCE OTHER MEMBERS OF ARO TO COOPERATE IN PROGRAM LINKING AAFLI TO ASIAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION (IN WHICH DOMEI EXPECTS TO PLAY EVEN MORE ACTIVE ROLE). HOWEVER, MAEKAWA NOTED THAT

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PAGE 02 TOKYO 05514 141135Z

SOUTHEAST ASIAN UNIONS VERY SUSPICIOUS OF AAFLI BECAUSE

LATTER'S ACTIVITIES FUNDED TO LARGE EXTENT BY USG.

2. IN SEPARATE MEETING WITH EMBOFFS APRIL 10, DOMEI METAL WORKERS SEC GEN FUJIWARA (DOMEI CHAIRMAN AMAIKE'S CLOSEST AIDE) SAID THAT AT LAST MONTH'S CHINESE FEDERATION OF LABOR CONGRESS IN TAIPEI, AMAIKE, AFL-CIO VICE PRES TONELLI AND ICFTU PRES NARAYANAN HAD AGREED TO SEEK ARO ENDORSEMENT OF PROGRAM AT MAY CONVENTION IN MANILA. ACCORDING TO FUJIWARA, PRESENT THINKING IS FOR ARO TO SET UP TWO COMMITTEES THROUGH WHICH PROGRAMS OF ASSISTANCE TO ITS AFFILIATES WOULD BE CHanneLED. ONE COMMITTEE WOULD HANDLE DOMEI-AAFLI PROJECTS AND SECOND WOULD DEAL WITH OTHER OFFERS OF ASSISTANCE SUCH AS THOSE COMING FROM EBERT FOUNDATION. FUJIWARA ADDED THAT NARAYANAN ARGUED ICFTU EXEC BOARD SHOULD ALSO APPROVE AID PROPOSALS AT ITS MEETING IN FALL AND SEEMED SOMEWHAT HESITANT ABOUT GIVING DOMEI-AAFLI PROGRAM THE GREEN LIGHT BEFORE SUCH A MEETING.

3. BOTH MAEKAWA AND FUJIWARA STRESSED DESIRABILITY OF HOLDING CONSULTATIONS IN JAPAN WITH AAFLI DIRECTOR PALADINO OR ONE OF HIS SENIOR STAFF MEMBERS UPON CONCLUSION OF ARO MEETING. THEY IMPLIED THEY WOULD PREFER DIRECT TALKS WHICH DO NOT INCLUDE ARO OR ICFTU REPS.

4. COMMENT: DOMEI LEADERSHIP CLEARLY SUSPICIOUS OF NARAYANAN AND ARO SEC GEN MATHUR ON GROUNDS THAT THEY ARE TRYING TO DELAY AS LONG AS POSSIBLE ARO ENDORSEMENT OF DOMEI-AAFLI COLLABORATION WITHIN ARO FRAMEWORK. NARAYANAN AND MATHUR MAY WELL BE REFLECTING CONCERNS OF SOHYO'S ICFTU AFFILIATES. WE HAVE HEARD ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS FROM SOHYO OFFICIALS (MOST RECENTLY FROM SOHYO PLANNING BUREAU DIRECTOR ARAI) THAT SOHYO UNIONS WISH TO STRENGTHEN THEIR TIES NOT ONLY TO SOUTHEAST ASIAN UNIONS BUT TO AFL-CIO AS WELL AND THEY THEREFORE OBJECT TO AFFLI-DOMEI PROGRAM ON GROUNDS IT WILL PERMIT DOMEI TO MONOPOLIZE THESE TIES IN NAME OF ENTIRE JAPANESE LABOR MOVEMENT.
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PAGE 03 TOKYO 05514 141135Z

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